

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/971,959

Examiner

JEAN B. FLEURANTIN

Applicant(s)

NAMBA, ISAO

Art Unit

2162

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 1/14/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-8, 10-13, 19, 21-24, 27 and 28.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 09 October 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is in response to the Applicant's arguments filed 14 January 2005, with respect to claims 1-8, 10-13, 19, 21-24, 27 and 28 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1-8, 10-13, 19, 21-24, 27 and 28 has been withdrawn. However, claims 9, 14-18, 20, 25, 26 and 29 are canceled as indicated in section 3.

2. Claims 1-8, 10-13, 19, 21-24, 27 and 28 remain pending for examination.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. J. Randall Beckers (Reg. No. 30,358) on April 1, 2005.

The application has been amended as follow:

In the claims,

Claim 11, line 1, change "The retrieval apparatus according to claim 9," to -- The retrieval apparatus according to claim 10, --.

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Claim 12, line 1, change "The retrieval apparatus according to claim 9," to -- The retrieval apparatus according to claim 10, --.

Claim 19, line 1, change "A retrieval method, comprising:" to -- A retrieval computer-implement method, comprising: --.

Claim 21, line 1, change "A retrieval method, comprising:" to -- A retrieval computer-implement method, comprising: --.

Claim 22, line 1, change "The retrieval method according to claim 20," to -- The retrieval method according to claim 21, --.

Claim 23, line 1, change "The retrieval method according to claim 20," to -- The retrieval method according to claim 21, --.

Please cancel claims 9, 14-18, 20, 25, 26 and 29.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

4. With respect to claims 1-8, 10-13, 19, 21-24, 27 and 28 are allowed over the prior art of record.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

With respect to claims 1, 8, 10, 19 and 28, the claimed features "a retrieval execution unit retrieving data from a database and extracting data similar to the question sentence inputted by the question sentence input unit; and a word contribution degree output unit outputting the contribution degree calculated by the word contribution degree calculation unit together with a corresponding word" in conjunction with other elements of the independent claims would not found anticipated or obvious over the prior art made of record. With respect to claims 13 and 24, the claimed features "a retrieval apparatus for extracting data similar to a question word by retrieval and displaying a contribution degree of a word contributing to the extraction together with a corresponding word on a screen, comprising a re-retrieval execution unit retrieving data from a database storing data to be retrieved and extracting data similar to a word weighted by said weighting unit" in conjunction with other elements of the independent claims would not found anticipated or obvious over the prior art made of record. With respect to claims 21 and 27, the claimed features "calculating a contribution degree of a word contributing to the extraction in the extracted retrieval result; displaying the calculated contribution degree together with a corresponding word on a screen" in conjunction with other elements of the independent claims would not found anticipated or obvious over the prior art made of record.

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The dependent claims, being definite, further limiting, and fully enabled by the specification are also allowed.

The closest prior art, Tsuda U.S. Patent Number 5,950,187 relates to a document retrieving apparatus and method thereof for inputting a specified character string that becomes a retrieval key. Barr et al., U.S. Patent Number 5,873,076 relates to an automated multi-user system for identifying and retrieving text and multi-media files related to a search topic from a database library composed of information from many various publisher sources but fail to teach the above limitations.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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CONTACT INFORMATION

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JEAN B. FLEURANTIN whose telephone number is 571 – 272-4035. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:05 to 4:35.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, JOHN E BREENE can be reached on 571 – 272-4107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-308-6606.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).




Jean Bolte Fleurantin

Patent Examiner

Technology Center 2100

April 2, 2005



SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER